

TIPS FOR KIDS

# How to Lower Your Risk for Type 2 Diabetes

National Diabetes Education Program



Take steps  
now for  
a healthy  
future.

Have  
more energy,  
more fun,  
and  
stay healthy.

*Take Charge!*

Learn more about how to lower your risk →

# Be active, eat well, and lower your risk!

## What is type 2 diabetes?

Type 2 diabetes is a serious disease. It used to be that only adults got type 2 diabetes. Now some kids and teens who are inactive and weigh too much are also getting type 2 diabetes. You cannot catch diabetes from others.

Diabetes means your blood glucose, also called blood sugar, is too high. In all of us, the food we eat turns into glucose and our bodies use it for energy. When you have diabetes, your body cannot use glucose as normal, and your blood glucose rises. Young people with type 2 diabetes may need to take pills or insulin to help the body use the glucose in the blood for energy. If blood glucose stays too high for too long, it can damage many parts of the body such as the heart, eyes, kidneys, and nerves.

Here are some warning signs for diabetes: you might urinate a lot, be very thirsty, feel tired, and have thick dark skin on the neck or under the arms. Not everyone has these warning signs. They find out they have diabetes when they go to the doctor for a check-up.



## What puts kids at risk for type 2 diabetes?

Kids are at risk if they:

- have a mom, dad, sister or brother, or other close relative who has type 2 diabetes
- weigh too much
- do not get enough physical activity
- are American Indian, Alaska Native, African American, Asian American, Hispanic/Latino, or Pacific Islander



## What should kids do to keep healthy?

- Stay at a **healthy weight**.
- Be more **physically active**.
- Eat smaller portions of **healthy foods**.
- **Limit time with** the TV, computer, and video.

## Keep on the go...

- **There are lots of ways to be active.** Go for a walk, take the stairs, ride a bike, dance, play tug of war, shoot hoops, skate board, roller blade, jump rope, take P.E. or gym in school, or play a fitness video game. Choose what you like best, and then just do it!
- **Start slowly.** Do not get upset if you can not do a lot—just keep moving! Add more activity each week.
- **Aim for 60 minutes everyday.** You do not have to do it all at once—20 minutes at a time, three times a day is fine.
- **Use a step counter for fun.** Use it to keep track of the number of steps you take in a day. Try to increase this number every day.



## How will physical activity help?



**Being physically active can help you:**

- build muscle and use up body fat
- grow strong bones
- stay flexible
- feel good and sleep better
- focus in school
- control your weight

## Here are some easy, healthy snacks that you can get or make yourself:

- A small bowl of whole-grain cereal with low-fat or non-fat milk.
- A piece of fruit.
- One serving of plain popcorn (about three cups).
- A slice of toast with ½ table-spoon of peanut butter.
- Half a turkey, lean beef, or tuna sandwich. Use mustard or a little low-fat mayonnaise.
- Raw vegetables such as carrots or celery with salsa.



plan  
your  
snacks

## What are good food choices?

Talk to your parents about your family making healthy food choices.



- Eat foods that are high in fiber like whole grain breads, cereal, brown rice, oatmeal, lentils, and dried peas, fruits, and vegetables.
- Eat small servings of fish, meat, poultry, low-fat cheese, and soy products like tofu. Remove skin and all the fat you can see. Have baked, boiled, or grilled foods instead of fried.
- Eat foods that are low in salt and do not add salt to your food.
- Eat lots of salad and vegetables.
- Drink water instead of regular soda or fruit drink.
- Eat 3 meals per day.

Eat a piece of fruit instead of a candy bar for a snack or dessert.

### Try these tips:

- Drink water instead of regular soda or fruit drink.
- When eating sweets, desserts, or candy, have only a small serving after a healthy meal and not every day.
- Eat slowly. Do not take second helpings. If you are still hungry after a meal, fill up on vegetables or a piece of fruit.



Follow the ideas on this tip sheet. Share



them with your friends and family. They are good for



everyone. Be active, eat well, and lower your risk for type 2 diabetes!

## Resources for kids and parents

### National Diabetes Education Program

Learn about diabetes and how to prevent it  
[www.YourDiabetesInfo.org](http://www.YourDiabetesInfo.org)

1-888-693-NDEP (6337)

### Bam! Body and Mind

Health, fitness, and safety information for kids  
[www.bam.gov](http://www.bam.gov)

### My Pyramid

Tips on healthy eating

<http://www.mypyramid.gov/KIDS/>

### Small Step

Tips to help kids and teens manage their weight

[www.smallstep.gov](http://www.smallstep.gov)

### We Can

Ways to enhance children's activity and nutrition

<http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov>

### WIN – Weight-control Information Network

Tips for parents to help your child lose weight

<http://win.niddk.nih.gov/>

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[www.YourDiabetesInfo.org](http://www.YourDiabetesInfo.org)

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[www.YourDiabetesInfo.org](http://www.YourDiabetesInfo.org) or 1-888-693-NDEP (6337), TTY: 1-866-569-1162

Participants in research studies can play a more active role in improving their own health and help others by contributing to health-related research. See [www.clinicaltrials.gov](http://www.clinicaltrials.gov) and [www.cdc.gov/diabetes/projects/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/projects/index.htm)